

Washington, DC (Oct. 2, 2012)—Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, issued a statement today after Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court Judge Robert Simpson struck down a narrow part of the Pennsylvania photo identification law, allowing voters to cast a ballot in the 2012 November election without having to provide a photo ID.

“I am encouraged that citizens in Pennsylvania will have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote this November without the politically-motivated restrictions that Republicans tried to impose,” said Cummings. “Voting is a right that should be encouraged for all eligible Americans, not a privilege reserved for a select few. While today’s ruling is a tremendous victory for the fair democratic process, I believe the law should be invalidated in its entirety, and I am hopeful that the appellate court will do so.”

Judge Simpson was ordered by the state Supreme Court to stop the law if he thought eligible voters would be unable to cast a ballot because of the law, or if the state could not make available photo ID cards to all eligible voters in time for the election.

The Republican-controlled state legislature passed the law earlier this year under the pretext of preventing voter fraud, despite the fact there have been no reported cases of voter fraud in the state.

In a [court stipulation](#) dated July 12, 2012, the State of Pennsylvania conceded that “there have been no prosecutions or investigations of in-person voter fraud in Pennsylvania,” and the state is “not aware of any incidents of in-person voter fraud in Pennsylvania.”

Pennsylvania House Majority Leader, Republican Mike Turzai, made clear the political intent of the law when he stated publicly that the voter ID requirement “is going to allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania.”

The law required voters to possess a state driver’s license, government employee ID, or a state non-driver ID card to cast their ballot. An estimated 1.3 million Pennsylvania residents lack a state- issued ID.

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that voters in urban areas like Philadelphia, where the state's Democratic-leaning voters are concentrated, are nearly twice as likely to be disenfranchised by the law.